

**Meeting Notes
Community Review Group
8-14-03**

ATTENDEES

Community Review Group: Kathie Joyner, Elizabeth Black, Kathy Snow, Phil Simpson, Ken Hotard, Bill Mitzelfeld, Terry Rodrigue, Gil Barth, and Joe Howard

Others: City of Boulder – Bob Harberg, Alan Taylor, Scott Kuhna, Jeff Arthur, Donna Scott, Douglas Sullivan; Decision-making Systems – Molly Tayer; URS - Scott Randall, Julie Vlier, Carol Anderson, Rob Zuber, Monica Bortolini

OPENING

Meeting began at 3:10 p.m.

Molly Tayer introduced the agenda and asked participants to go around and introduce themselves. A number of staff from both URS Corporation and the city of Boulder were included in the meeting introductions.

Molly also walked the participants through a set of proposed ground rules for the meeting and asked participants if they would work with the ground rules for the next three meetings. CRG participants were in agreement to do so.

Scott Randall opened up the review presentation for the technical memoranda. Scott suggested that CRG members stated in the first meeting that they would like to have more discussion than presentation and Scott hoped that the format of the key issues presentation would allow for this. Molly explained to the meeting participants that all of the key issues identified by staff were provided on flip charts on the wall and would be used to capture specific comments.

The discussion was opened with an invitation to the group to provide any feedback or comments on the packet they received in the mail.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

General

- Q: Who is the target audience for the Technical Memorandums?
- Assumed reader had a lot of technical knowledge
 - Acronym list needed

- Slowed reader down

A: Memos will be in the Plan Appendix

Q: Was WQ monitoring for instream or groundwater pollution?

A: Groundwater is not in the Utility Dept.'s scope

Technical Memorandum #1: Stormwater Quality

Key Issue #1 – Further develop and implement a prioritization system that incorporates water quality into all aspects of land use planning – “big picture”

Q: Because the city has only completed a small percentage of the projects from the CDUMP, will implementing the prioritization system speed up or slow down how quickly projects are completed in the new plan?

A: It will potentially slow down master planning efforts and completion of projects.

Comment: Then should list as a “con” that it might slow down the planning process and shift resources away from flood management master plans.

Comment: Wants to see more projects completed and fewer plans.

Comment: Don't look just at channels, look at entire basin. The relatively small diameter pipe at the Diagonal Highway is a good example of this.

Comment: Should start downstream and work upstream.

Q: how does funding across all areas get prioritized?

Key Issues #2 – Expand the Greenways Program

* Bring this back again during the flood discussion. Need to discuss how projects are prioritized and ways to create “off peak” flows with combined programming.

Key Issue #3 – Develop stricter regulations or incentives to reduce total impervious area and disconnect impervious areas to reduce runoff (also referred to in key issues as MDCIA = “minimum directly connected impervious areas”)

Q: I assume that Boulder charges fees for impervious areas?

A: Yes, and Boulder requires developers to provide detention.

Comment: If the developer provides more detention area than is required by code, why couldn't the city give them a break on their development fees? Should look at financial or other approaches, ease of permit, land densities and fees to create incentives to do better projects.

Q: Do we know where we may be actually requiring developers to do things (in current land use regulations) that are in conflict with this?

Q: What about city requirements/objectives in one department that might conflict with another department's requirement/objectives such as Planning's "new urbanism" - not wanting garages in front of residences, which would necessitate building longer driveways (i.e., impervious areas) than might otherwise be needed? (Example: conflict in land use code and North Boulder Subcommunity Plan)

A: Yes, this is an issue that should be considered.

Comment: We should have a clear idea of city regulations that might impede our goal of lessening impervious areas. Supporting more density and reducing amount of impervious area are conflicting objectives.

Comment: Need to know how you define "stricter regulations." Need to say specifically what it is you want to see. Advocate performance-based standard with incentives to reach them.

- Example of current problem: parking requirements
- Parking is a market-driven development standard. City offers lower space provisions for alt modes, but developer knows customer needs and can't get financing if they do not meet market standards. Important to note that there are other objectives in conflict.

(K-Mart/Safeway example of missed opportunity)

Comment: Incentives and flexibility are good things. Get more bang for your buck. New technology comes out all the time so the Plan should be flexible enough to accommodate this. Should have performance-based goals for clean water.

Comment: Only wants to see performance-based standards coupled with financial incentives.

Comment: Consider a point system similar to the LEES program.

Consensus: Performance-based incentives are more effective than regulations.

Comment: Regarding impervious area reduction, change wording from “homeowners” to “property owners.”

Q: Is there an attempt being made to shift WQ responsibility from the public to the private sector?

A: Not intentionally.

Comment: Most WQ data is from Boulder Creek and blanks can be misleading. Habitat maps should accurately reflect that the data is not for all of Boulder. Water quality maps need work.

Q: When we speak about redevelopment and parking lots – how many parcels are we really talking about?

Key Issue #4 - Develop other BMP's that are conducive to retrofitting needs.

Q: How good is good? How good is good enough? Is there a WQ point past which there are no additional benefits? How do we define the benefit of reaching a certain state of water quality?

A: The answer is dependent upon community values. If the community wants fishable, swimmable, drinkable water quality, then the city will have to spend the money. Chemical and biological data from Boulder Creek clearly indicate that the water quality of the creek deteriorates from the canyon mouth to reaches in the eastern part of the city.

Q: BMP vs. performance-based standard. Can these be aligned?

Comment: If WQ detention basins are not required by Boulder, they should be.

- LEES program example
- regs in conflict – difficult to build parking structures in Boulder because of regulations and cost

Comment: Look at the Goose Creek design – City built own example of how they DO NOT want things done.

A: The project described was constructed nearly 20 years ago and is not representative of projects constructed today.

Comment: If we encourage more impervious materials – like impervious concrete, won't weed and grasses grow in these and might this have the unintended consequence of people using herbicides all over them and then adding this to runoff and groundwater?

Comment: With limited funds, the money that would be spent on maintenance and inspection would be better spent on fixing existing detention ponds.

Technical Memorandum #2: Stormwater Drainage

Key Issue #1 – Update Stormwater Collection Master Plan

Q: Is Master Plan integrated with county projects? Does county have comparable plan?

A: No to both questions, and the scope of this project is for the city and areas to be annexed within next 15 years including enclaves.

Comment: City has 20 years experience with Master Plan. Don't spend money on remodeling and restudying those areas we know about; look at known problem areas and areas that are going to be developed in future.

Key Issue # 2 – Maintenance – Implement a structure inventory and maintenance database that is accessible by all city departments

No comments

Key Issue #3A – Pros/cons of requiring detention for redevelopment

Q: Does this represent a recent change in philosophy for city staff? In North Boulder, city has required filling of retention ponds. (Example: old Rayback property)

A: Retention is different than detention. These ponds were most probably old stock ponds that had the potential to create a standing water nuisance and were not designed to release water according to current design criteria.

Comment: Incentive-based performance standards should be used instead of fixed regulatory schemes, particularly for retrofitting where every situation is different. Tremendous potential for considerable cost to be borne by property owners rather than government.

Comment: If taken too far, then you've disincentivized.

Comment: Does not support requiring everyone to have detention. It might not be worth it. Without good inspection program, HOAs will not maintain.

Comment: Recognize the multiple "headed" feature of "who pays." Each of these may add costs across many layers of their application.

Key Issue #3B – Determine pros/cons of city assuming maintenance or inspection of detention facilities

Comment: May be a way to create an option to fix or expand already existing detention to make them function better, cover more need. Look at how to do this in a way to get “bang for your buck.”

Comment: Added benefit – city may identify opportunities to increase capacity – add detention to existing facilities (during master planning).

Comment: Imperative that city has understanding of detention facilities to see how they function regarding stormwater.

Comment: Good for city to inspect detention facilities, but not maintain them. (Staff: Propose having them inspected by a PE and that verification be sent to the city.)

Comment: Need to see the fiscal impact of this proposal to determine benefit.

Comment: It is appropriate for city to inspect these; not always appropriate for city to maintain. Need to see how this option would work.

Comment: City requires the detention ponds we have in our subdivision; now these are source of contaminants. Need to go back and see what these are actually doing for us.

Comment: Need a really good inspection program. Propose a fine system for violations.

Comment: Imperative that we not underestimate the impacts from how these are operating today – huge impacts.

Key Issue 3C: Reconsider regional detention facilities during master planning

Comment: Real benefits to regional detention, however a city as built out as Boulder, may be limited benefits.

Comment: Can be done with park development. Nice creative features.

Q: Can city buy-back private detention ponds and use any of these that may be applicable?

A: CAUTION - on “buyback” and how we use funds. HOAs may want to dedicate so that they don’t have to maintain. Not sure we should allocate money to buy these. OR - provide incentive to the property owner to expand...

Comment: We should be looking for other opportunities to put everyone's money into place where we can get the most benefits.

Key Issue #4 – Require an estimate of the groundwater table elevation

Comment: Supports recommendation regarding mitigation requirements. Sewers have dewatered wells in North Boulder. It is especially important that city have good inspection of check dams.

Comment: Doesn't support performance-based standards – thinks in more qualitative terms.

Q: Should city stay away from pumping? Who are property owners allowed to impact?

A: Although North Boulder has many wells, there may be other areas where pumping won't impact.

Comment: Doesn't support regulation that would require everyone to do a test.

Q: How do we develop BMP/performance standards to assure level of performance for this? Who would be impacted and how given a proposed development?

Q: When do we "just say no" to basement and subsurface development?

Comment: This would be appropriate for certain zones of the city; there are other areas where it would not be of concern.

CLOSING

Molly posted the proposed dates for the remaining review meetings. These are:

Thursday, September 18th
Thursday, October 16th

We will use the same room, unless other participation needs preclude this from working.

MEETING DEBRIEF

What worked:

- E-mail information works well
- The room is good

What needs to be fixed:

- Do not hand out new information at the beginning of a meeting. Get all information out for our review with our packets, please.
- Need glossary of terms and acronyms
- Would like to have a succinct presentation and discrete discussion time. Going back and forth is confusing. Tighten up the presentation. Allow enough time for discussion.
- Make exercises out of input process. Have everyone post their comments and thoughts up-front so we can see what everyone has brought into the review. Create time to gather information and time to report out on information.
- Does staff need to respond to everything we are considering? Took too much time.